

University of South Florida
Eric Pfeiffer Suncoast Alzheimer's Center
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5th Annual Victory Ball

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Director's corner



Dear Friends and Supporters,

You may have heard that the Florida legislature voted to officially fold the Johnnie B. Byrd Alzheimer's Center and Research Institute into the University of South Florida. This is a great addition to our already strong program in Alzheimer's research, patient care, and caregiver education. It is accurate that the Byrd Institute did not get special funding from the state. However, the clinical entities of the USF Eric Pfeiffer Suncoast Alzheimer's Center, the USF Memory Disorders Clinic, and the Byrd Clinical Research team are fully operational.

We remain committed to delivering the highest quality of patient care, conducting all levels of research towards new treatments and a cure for Alzheimer's disease, and providing educational outreach and support for patients, caregivers, and health professionals in the community. We are working on ways to improve and expand our services while continuing to grow as Florida's premier center of excellence for all things Alzheimer's.

Under the umbrella of USF Health, we all share one vision to end Alzheimer's disease. We are one center at the forefront of research and care. We are one place for families. Together, we will forge ahead in our battle against memory disorders—but we can't do it without you. We thank you for your loyal and continuing support!

Amanda G. Smith, M.D.
Medical Director



Fall 2009

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA Eric Pfeiffer Suncoast Alzheimer's Center Newsletter

Annual geriatric conference is a huge success!

The annual geriatric institute, "*Partners in Care: Quality Care for the Older Adult*", held June 23rd, 24th and 25th at the Clarion Hotel and Conference Center in Tampa, was very well attended and well received. A total of 129 health care professionals attended the three day continuing education conference, including assisted living facility and nursing home administrators, nurses, social workers, guardians, ombudsmen and mental health counselors. The program was also a 3 credit graduate course in collaboration with the School of Aging Studies.



This was the eleventh year Suncoast coordinated this conference and it has gained a strong following in the aging network, with many participants attending year after year. An entire day each year is always devoted to Alzheimer's and related dementias and this is always our greatest attended day. The remaining program focused on critical topics in geriatrics including depression, cardiovascular diseases, end of life care, medications and rehabilitation to name a few. In addition to the conference, the participants also had the opportunity ability to meet with various exhibitors.

The evaluations praised the program and presenters, which were mostly from USF College of Medicine, College of Nursing, School of Physical Therapy, School of Aging Studies, FMHI, James A. Haley Veterans Administration and Hospice.

This conference provides us the ability to network with health care providers in the aging field throughout Tampa and surrounding counties and let them know about the services provided at Suncoast.

Clinical studies now enrolling



We are enrolling participants in several new research studies for Alzheimer's disease. Research is targeting several areas including beta amyloid, a protein that clumps into plaques in the brain. These amyloid plaques are the hallmark of Alzheimer's disease.

Researchers are developing treatments that may clear beta amyloid from the brain or prevent it from forming in the first place. Some of the new studies will use the body's own immune system. Some studies use pills, others use intravenous infusion. All clinical trials must have a placebo group in order to compare the study medicine with a control group.

We are very excited about participating in these new research studies and the new direction in clinical research. Call Barbara Luhn or Nicole Ventura, our Clinical Study Coordinators, at (813)974-4355 for more information or if you are interested in participating.

Suncoast offers memory screenings

Most older adults know the benefits of medical screenings and get their blood pressure and cholesterol checked on a regular basis. But how many older adults are aware of the benefit of having their memory screened as well?

A memory screening takes less than thirty minutes and can be done in person or over the phone. It is not a diagnostic tool, but can determine if a person has a memory problem and should seek further evaluation by a specialist.

Early detection of memory problems is very important. There are other medical conditions that cause memory loss and have symptoms similar to Alzheimer's disease. Depression, alcoholism, anemia, diabetes, thyroid imbalance, vitamin deficiencies, medication side effects and acute infections can cause memory loss. If a person has one of these conditions, his or her memory loss could possibly be reversed following proper medical treatment.

If the memory loss is due to Alzheimer's disease, the sooner the diagnosis is made the better. Although there is no cure, treatments are available to preserve function and slow the progression of the disease. The sooner they receive medication, the longer they continue to enjoy a higher quality of life.

Alzheimer's disease is not a normal part of aging. If someone you know is concerned about his or her memory please encourage them to get a memory screening.

NATIONAL MEMORY SCREENING DAY

Suncoast staff and many others from the USF Health Byrd Alzheimer's Center will be conducting free memory screenings on November 17th from 8:30am - 4:00pm in our building. We will also have exhibits, medication reviews by pharmacists and lectures.

If you know individuals who are concerned about their memory, have them call (813) 974-4355 to schedule a screening appointment. We can accommodate people if they cannot make it on the 17th and schedule appointments in December.

We are planning other memory screening events this winter. Call the Center or check the website for more information.

Suncoast emphasizes caregiver support

Part of the mission of the Center is to provide support and education for caregivers. Suncoast holds 6-8 seminars a year in Hillsborough, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, and Hernando counties. The day long seminar, "Alzheimer's Disease: What Caregivers Need to Know" presents tips, resources and information to help caregivers understand the disease process, manage behaviors, learn effective approaches for communication and hear the most current treatment and research opportunities.

Seven programs were conducted this year reaching over 600 caregivers. The programs were held at Aston Gardens in Tampa, New Beginnings Church in South Tampa, Silverthorn Country Club in Brooksville, the Hale Center in Dunedin, the Estates of Carpenters in Lakeland and the Palms of Largo. We also had our first seminar in our own building. A special thank you goes to our sponsors: Aston Gardens, Bayada Nurses, Arden Courts, Polk Family Caregivers and the Palms of Largo.

UPCOMING CAREGIVER SEMINAR

December 15, 2009
The Palms of Largo
400 Lake Drive
Largo, FL

We are planning more seminars this winter and spring. Check our calendar on our website at www.SuncoastAlzheimers.com or call Mady Ernst for future dates and locations.

The Eric Pfeiffer Suncoast Alzheimer's Center at the USF Health Byrd Alzheimer's Institute

cordially invites you to

the 5th Annual Victory Ball

benefitting Alzheimer's disease research, caregiver programs and health professional education

Saturday, November 28, 2009 at your place

You can do more to fight Alzheimer's disease without leaving home. Instead of hosting our annual event, we invite you to spend the night in. Play games. Watch a movie. Do the cha-cha. Have a ball! Whatever you do, you'll get the joy of knowing your donation will go even further to bring hope to those with Alzheimer's.

Now, more than ever, we need to put all of our resources toward finding a cure.

To make a gift, go to
www.usfhealthvictoryball.info

To request an invitation or donation card,
please call our office at (813) 974-4355.

Update on education and outreach

We receive many requests from support groups, professional organizations, civic and community groups, churches and long term care facilities to speak on various topics pertaining to Alzheimer's, caregiver issues and research. Suncoast faculty were quite busy the past few months providing education and training to a variety of professional and lay audiences.

Here are some highlights:

Dr. Amanda Smith, Medical Director and Dr. Kristin Fargher, Assistant Director, presented at the Winter Haven and Tampa NARFE meetings and appreciate the continued financial support we get from NARFE members. Drs. Smith and Fargher also provide weekly training for third year medical students and geriatric psychiatry fellows from USF College of Medicine.

We have a long standing relationship with the Alzheimer's Association and Eileen Poiley, MS, Director of Education, was one of the speakers at their caregiver series. Ms. Poiley also presented at the annual Polk County Caregiver Summit in Lakeland, which drew a crowd of more than 400 caregivers. We also presented at the North Tampa Rotary Club and conducted training for the Hillsborough County Department of Aging and the Florida Association of Homes for the Aging.

Suncoast faculty along with others from the USF Health Byrd Alzheimer's Center presented a six week class, "Understanding Memory Loss: Reality, Risks and Research", for the USF Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. Presenters included: Amanda Smith MD, Kristin Fargher, MD, Eileen Poiley, MS, Barbara Luhn, MSW, Ashok Raj, MD, Huntington Potter, PhD and Nancy Teten, LCSW. The course was extremely well received and will be conducted the course again this winter.

We also spoke at the support groups at Brighton Gardens, Palm Harbor Senior Center and University Village and gave community talks at Emeritus at Carrollwood, West Central Florida Area Agency on Aging, John Knox Village, University Village and Arden Courts.

We have already confirmed speaking engagements for 2010 at the 6th Samaritans Alzheimer's Auxiliary Educational Seminar in February in Sun City Center and the Polk County Caregiver Summit in March.



Dr. Fargher at the Lifelong Learning Class

Notes from Someone in Retirement

Life is good. Everyday is Saturday. I miss all of the colleagues, staff, patients and caregivers at Suncoast. I have visited the Center occasionally, but not as often as I had anticipated. I have not been idle, though. Natasha and I attended the American Association of Geriatric Psychiatrists (AAGP) meeting in Honolulu and my son Michael and I went to the American Psychiatric Association (APA) meeting in San Francisco in May.

For the most part I have been working on my book on successful aging. Its current working title is Successful Aging 101: 101 Winning Strategies to Attain and Maintain Health and Wealth in Your Later Years. Issues dealt with in the book include: 1. A definition of successful aging; 2. Where to live in retirement; 3. Who to be and what to do in retirement; 4. The importance of social connections; 5. How to preserve optimal health; 6. How to preserve mental health; 7. How to maintain the brain, and memory problems; 8. How to preserve wealth; 9. How to maintain independence; 10. The inner, spiritual, and sexual life of older persons. 11. Preparing to say good-bye with dignity; 12. What younger people can learn from successfully aging individuals.

I can't wait to see it finished, and can't wait to see it in print. I'll let you know when that happens. Shoot me an e-mail, if you feel like it. My e-mail address is still epfeiffe@health.usf.edu. In the meantime, all very best wishes.

*Affectionately,
Eric Pfeiffer, MD*